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COMMEMORATION OF THE FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF THE UNITED NATIONS IN 1995

Letter dated 24 January 1995 from the Permanent Representative of Finland to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit to you the text of the final document of the International Conference, "Nordic Countries in the United Nations - for Peace and Development", held at Helsinki on 11 and 12 January 1995 (see annex).

The Conference, arranged by the Nordic Council - representing the Parliaments of Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden and the parliaments of the autonomous regions of the Aaland Islands, Greenland and the Faroe Islands - was the first international event related to the commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations. Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali attended the Conference, which was opened by the President of Finland, Martti Ahtisaari. Among the participants were several Prime Ministers as well as Foreign and Defence Ministers from the Nordic countries. All speakers of the Nordic Parliaments as well as a great number of parliamentarians also attended.

The main topics dealt with were: global governance, the United Nations Security Council, collective security and crisis management, the economic and social dimension and future Nordic cooperation with the United Nations. The conclusions of the Conference are included in the enclosed declaration.

I should be grateful if the text of the present letter and its annex could be circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 44.

(Signed) Wilhelm BREITENSTEIN
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ANNEX

Final document of the International Conference, "Nordic Countries in the United Nations - for Peace and Development", held at Helsinki on 11 and 12 January 1995

The Nordic Council,

Representing the Danish, Finnish, Icelandic, Norwegian, and Swedish Parliaments and the parliaments of the autonomous regions of the Aaland Islands, Greenland and the Faroe Islands;

Conscious of the increased interdependence of all States and all peoples which calls for improved international institutions for world peace and sustainable human development;

Aware of the central role of the United Nations in world politics, in particular that of the Security Council, in maintaining peace and security in a new post-cold war setting;

Noting the linkage between peace and security, on one hand, and political, economic and social development, including democracy and the rule of law, on the other;

Emphasizing that global challenges call for global responsibility;

Reminding that all major initiatives should be compatible with sustainable development, as laid out in resolutions by the 1992 United Nations Conference in Rio;

Calling, therefore, for the strengthening of the United Nations;

Recommends the following:

1. Global governance

- By virtue of the universal membership of the United Nations and the principle of sovereign equality, the capacity of the United Nations as a forum for the political and moral legitimation of measures affecting the international community should be reinforced.

- The United Nations system should focus on its role and capacity to establish and maintain international regimes, including the formulation, enforcement and supervision of international norms and standards.

- In the spirit of the preamble to the Charter, the United Nations should develop a parliamentary dimension, to express the views of the peoples of the world through the elected representative bodies of the Member States.

- The United Nations should encourage effective participation in its work by non-governmental organizations as agents of the civil society, and should create modalities for a continuous international dialogue with trade and industry as well as trade unions, keeping in mind the parliamentary dimension as an instrument to support and to widen such contacts.

2. The United Nations Security Council

- As a constructive step in strengthening the Security Council, its membership should be enlarged in a balanced manner.

- The possible inclusion of new members of the Security Council should be done in a manner which does not prejudice its capacity for decision-making.

- Reforms of the Security Council should be implemented through dialogue and cooperation.

3. Collective security and crisis management

- Early warning and prevention of conflicts should receive more attention than is given at present.

- The value of subsidiarity in crisis management should be appreciated so that United Nations activities should, whenever feasible, aim to complement and support actions by States of the region, in the spirit of Chapter VIII of the Charter. Similarly, regional cooperation should always aim to support the United Nations in maintaining international peace and security.

- Modalities should be found for adequate and timely financing of crisis management measures and peace-keeping activities.

- As peace and security are closely interlinked with political, economic and social development, including democracy and the realization of human rights world wide, crisis management should consist of an adequate combination of diplomatic, military, legal, economic, environmental and social measures of stabilization.

4. Economic and social dimension

- The international community should see the alleviation of misery and the eradication of extreme poverty as its most urgent task.

- The World Summit for Social Development, on which the Nordic countries place high hopes, must also be seen from a peace and security angle which cannot be isolated from economic, environmental and social factors.

- As the people living in poverty often represent underutilized capacity, poverty is not only a denial of their economic and social

human rights but also a failure to mobilize the full potential of all people.

- Combating unemployment and underemployment and the promotion of productive and freely chosen employment are key means to alleviate poverty and achieve social integration.

- Successful eradication of extreme poverty is conditional upon democracy, accountability and transparency in government.

- The empowerment of women and strengthening of their participation in society should be an element in all initiatives aimed at alleviating social plight, especially hunger, illiteracy, poverty and population growth.

- In increasing development aid, equal attention should be paid to the qualitative as to the quantitative aspects.

5. Future Nordic cooperation within the United Nations

- Nordic consultation and cooperation within international forums, notably the United Nations, has long traditions and will be maintained. The Nordic countries will continue to play an active role within the United Nations. In cooperation with and within the European Union, the Nordic countries will contribute to a strengthening of the United Nations as the world organization embarks on its next 50 years.